

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06 SIL-01 IO-14

DRC-01 NIC-01 TRSE-00 OMB-01 OC-06 CCO-00 USPS-02

FEA-02 INT-08 /171 W

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R 050727Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9786

INFO USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY MANILA

USMISSION OECD PARIS

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

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EO 11652: NA

TAGS: ELAB JA

SUBJ: LABOR'S SPRING OFFENSIVE - STATUS REPORT THREE

REF: TOKYO 1124

SUMMARY: LABOR'S SPRING WAGE STRUGGLE (SHUNTO) THIS YEAR AIMED BOTH AT STEEP WAGE INCREASES AND AT DRUMMING UP OPPOSITION TO RULING LDP. INITIAL RANK-AND-FILE UNION SUPPORT GREATER THAN IN PAST YEARS. SCENARIO OF RALLIES AND STRIKES INCLUDES TRANSPORTATION TIE-UPS AND POSSIBLE GENERAL STRIKE. SERIOUSNESS OF LABOR'S INTENTIONS, REACTION OF EMPLOYERS AND CONSEQUENT LEVEL OF LABOR UNREST WILL BECOME CLEAR WHEN INDIVIDUAL ENTERPRISE UNIONS BEGIN ACTUAL NEGOTIATIONS WITH MANAGEMENT IN MARCH. END SUMMARY.

1. SHUNTO HAS TWIN GOALS THIS YEAR: ECONOMIC - WIN MORE FOR WORKERS; AND POLITICAL - DISCREDIT TANAKA CABINET AS PRELUDE TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CAMPAIGN AGAINST LDP IN JULY DIET UPPER HOUSE ELECTIONS. FUELED

BY WHAT GOJ MINISTRY OF LABOR (MOL) CALLS QTE PUBLIC'S PROFOUND MOOD OF UNEASINESS UNQTE OVER CURRENT STATUS AND FUTURE PROSPECTS OF INFLATION, OIL CRISIS AND ESSENTIAL COMMODITY SHORTAGES, 1974 WAGE INCREASE DEMANDS UPON BOTH GOJ AND PRIVATE EMPLOYERS ALREADY AT RECORD HEIGHTS AND CLIMBING HIGHER AS UNIONS SEE CPI STILL RISING SHARPLY. LABOR'S DEMANDS THAT GOJ CURB INFLATION AND PROVIDE INCREASED RIGHTS AND BENEFITS TO WORKERS COMBINE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL MOTIVES.

2. AS USUAL SHUNTO STRATEGY INITIALLY MAPPED OUT BY LARGER LABOR CONFEDERATIONS LEAVING INDIVIDUAL UNIONS TO DETERMINE LATER HOW AND TO WHAT EXTENT THEY WILL PARTICIPATE. SOHYO-CHURITSUOREN JOINT SPRING STRUGGLE COMMITTEE SCHEDULE NOW INCLUDES FOLLOWING DATES FOR QTE UNITED ACTION UNQTE JAN 26, MAR 1-3, MAR 26 AND APR 5-10 WHEN SHOWDOWN STRUGGLE TO BEGIN. UNION LEADERS THREATEN FINAL STRIKE WILL BE QTE GENERAL UNQTE AND, IF NECESSARY, LAST OVER 72 HOURS.

3. PATTERN OF UNIONS' ACTION THOSE DATES BEGINNING TO EMERGE. AS USUAL COUNCIL OF PUBLIC CORPORATION AND NATIONAL ENTERPRISE UNIONS (KOROYKO-MEMBERSHIP 837,000) PROVIDES BACKBONE OF SHUNTO ACTIVITIES, BUT FEB 18 WILL SEE ANTI-INFLATION RALLY JOINTLY SPONSORED BY ALL FOUR NATIONAL LABOR CENTERS PLUS OPPOSITION POLITICAL PARTIES. FEB 25 TO MAR 5 DAILY DEMONSTRATIONS SCHEDULED AT DIET WITH LIMITED STRIKES BY SOHYO UNIONS IN BOTH PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTOR. KOROKYO AND UNION OF METAL AND ENGINEERING WORKER (ZENKOKUKINZOKU - 220,000) PLAN SPOT STRIKES OF UP TO 24 HOURS ON MAR 1 AND AGAIN MAR 26. (SINCE KOROKYO INCLUDES JNR WORKERS UNIONS, THESE STRIKES MAY CAUSE RAIL TRANSPORT TIE-UPS SIMILAR TO THOSE IN 1973 WHICH FINALLY INCITD COMMUTER RIOTS.) SYNTHETIC CHEMICAL WORKERS (GOKAROREN - 128,000) PLANS SHORT, UNITED STRIKE MAR 15.

4. FIRST WAVE OF SHUNTO ACTION, RALLY ON JAN 26, LURED CROWD MUCH LARGER THAN MOL EXPECTED - ESTIMATED 25,000 IN TOKYO PLUS ANOTHER 23,000 TOTAL IN 24 OTHER CITIES. MAJORITY OF PLACARDS IN TOKYO RALLY SUPPORTED POLITICAL DEMANDS, E.G. QTE DOWN WITH PRICES AND WITH TANAKA CABINET UNQTE. MOL OFFICIALS SAID THIS COULD INDICATE THAT ORGANIZED LABOR ALREADY TAKING RECORD WAGE BOOSTS FOR GRANTED AND NOW CONCENTRATING ON ELECTION LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CAMPAIGN.

5. WAGE INCREASES CONTINUE PRIME ISSUE BUT OTHER DEMANDS AS PRESENTED TO LABOR MIN HASEGAWA BY SOHYO AND CHURITSU-ROREN INCLUDE: (A) STRIKE RIGHT FOR PUBLIC SECTOR WORKERS; (B) NATIONAL MINIMUM WAGE OF SIXTY THOUSAND YEN; (C) SHORTER WORK SCHEDULES; (D) IMPROVED PENSIONS; AND (E) MORE GOJ ASSISTANCE TO UNEMPLOYED.

6. COMMENT:

(A) STILL IMPOSSIBLE TO PREDICT SERIOUSNESS OF STIKES OR OF RAIL, POSTAL AND TELECOMMUNICATION SERVICE DISRUPTION. BIG BUSINESS FIRMS AT LEAST EXPECTED NOT TO BREAK WHAT JAPANESE CALL QTE BONDS OF COMMON DESTINY BETWEEN LABOR AND MANAGEMENT UNQTE BY REFUSING INCREASE SETTLEMENT COMPROMISES NOW ESTIMATED AT AROUND 25 PERCENT. SMALLER, LESS PROFITABLE, AND LESS UNIONIZED SEGMENTS OF INDUSTRY WOULD DO BEST THEY CAN AND ALREADY WIDE WAGE GAP BETWEEN HIGHEST AND LOWEST PAYING FIRMS COULD INCREASE.

(B) GOJ ATTITUDE TOWARDS PUBLIC SECTOR PAY BOOSTS EXPECTED TO AFFECT SEVERITY OF SHUNTO DISPUTE TACTICS, BUT CONCILIATORY ATTITUDE WOULD MEAN ADDITIONAL GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES SETTING UP SQUEEZE BETWEEN BUDGETARY AND INFLATION TROUBLES FOR GOVERNMENT ON ONE HAND AND EXTENSIVE LABOR UNREST ON OTHER.

(C) STRIKE RIGHT ISSUE CONTINUES TO LIK DIFFICULT. SOHYO PROMISED MEMBERSHIP CONCLUSIVE ACTION THIS YEAR, BUT ONLY AREA IN WHICH GOJ MIGHT CONCEDE FALLS FAR SHORT OF WHAT SOHYO THOUGHT ABLE TO ACCEPT. (WHILE SEEKING STRIKE RIGHT FOR ALL (1) PUBLIC SERVANTS, AND (2) EMPLOYEES OF GOVERNMENT CORPORATIONS AND NATIONAL ENTERPRISES, IF ONLY THE LATTER GROUP WERE GRANTED IT, SOHYO NO DOUBT WOULD BE SATISFIED FOR THIS YEAR. THE GOJ REPORTEDLY STUDYING POSSIBILITY OF GRANTING WIDER COLLECTIVE BARGAINING RIGHTS TO GOVERNMENT PRINTING BUREAU, MINT AND TOBACCO MONOPOLY. IT IS NOT RPT NOT CONSIDERING LEGALIZING STRIKES ON GOVT RAILWAYS, NOR IN THE POSTAL AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES.)

(D) ASIDE FROM WAGE INCREASES, REMAINING DEMANDS  
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NOT CONSIDERED GUT ISSUES BUT DESIGNED INITIALLY TO STRENGTHEN WORKERS' OPPOSITION TO GOVERNMENT AND LATER TO PROVIDE LABOR AREAS IN WHICH IT COULD CONCEDE OR COMPROMISE DURING NEGOTIATIONS.  
SHOESMITH

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## Message Attributes

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